

On Wednesday, February 24th, 2021 at 10:15 PM, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Health Ministers,

I am writing to you on advice from the Australian Department of Health (the Department) to seek clarification on information requested in a Freedom of Information (FOI) request that was sent to the Department.

The Department's initial response on 24th August 2020 (attached: "Initial FOI 1937 Response"), stated: "To obtain the information you are seeking please direct your request to the various State and territory Departments of Health".

After further correspondence between the FOI author and the Department, a more formal response was given (attached: "FOI 1937"), yet the outcome remained the same.

I am therefore writing to you to on initial advice by the Department of Health to confirm whether you do hold the information requested in the original request to the Department, as shown in attachment "FOI 1937" and pasted again below:

"All records in the possession, custody or control of The Department of Health describing the isolation of a SARS-COV-2 virus, directly from a sample taken from a diseased patient, where the patient sample was not first combined with any other source of genetic material (i.e. monkey kidney cells aka vero cells; lung cells from a lung cancer patient). Please note that I am using "isolation" in the every-day sense of the word: the act of separating a thing(s) from everything else. I am not requesting records where "isolation of SARS-COV-2" refers instead to:

- the culturing of something,*
- or the performance of an amplification test (i.e. a PCR test),*
- or the sequencing of something.*

Please also note that my request is not limited to records that were authored by The Department of Health or that pertain to work done by The Department of Health. My request includes any sort of record, for example (but not limited to) any published peer reviewed study that The Department of Health has downloaded or printed."

I look forward to your response.

[REDACTED]

----- Original Message -----

On Wednesday, May 26th, 2021 at 12:58 PM, MOH-GIPA <MOH-GIPA@health.nsw.gov.au> wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find attached correspondence with regard to your recent inquiry.

Kind regards

Lisa Yozghatlian

GIPA Officer | Corporate Governance and Risk Management, **Legal and Regulatory Services**

NSW Ministry of Health | 1 Reserve Road , St Leonards, New South Wales 2065

www.health.nsw.gov.au



Health

This message is intended for the addressee named and may contain confidential information. If you are not the intended recipient, please delete it and notify the sender.

Views expressed in this message are those of the individual sender, and are not necessarily the views of NSW Health or any of its entities.



GIPA21-60 [REDACTED] Do not hold - information publicly available - 25 May 2021.pdf
157K

[REDACTED]
Dear [REDACTED]

Informal request for information

I refer to your informal request for information held by the NSW Ministry of Health for the following information:

"All records in the possession, custody or control of The Department of Health describing the isolation of a SARS-COV-2 virus, directly from a sample taken from a diseased patient, where the patient sample was not first combined with any other source of genetic material (i.e. monkey kidney cells aka vero cells; lung cells from a lung cancer patient). Please note that I am using "isolation" in the every-day sense of the word: the act of separating a thing(s) from everything else. I am not requesting records where "isolation of SARS-COV-2" refers instead to:

- the culturing of something,*
- Or the performance of an amplification test (i.e. a PCR test),*
- Or the sequencing of something.*

Please also note that my request is not limited to records that were authored by The Department of Health or that pertain to work done by The Department of Health. My request includes any sort of record, for example (but not limited to) any published peer reviewed study that The Department of Health has downloaded or printed."

Preliminary searches for information were undertaken by the relevant areas within the Ministry of Health, and it was confirmed, that from our understanding of the scope of your application, we do not hold the information requested.

It has been suggested internally that you contact NSW Health Pathology to discuss your request further to determine whether they may or may not hold any relevant information.

However, information has been identified that may assist with your inquiry this information is publicly available.

Information publicly available

The following information is publicly available. Please find below resources that may be of use to answer queries the Ministry has received in regards to SARS-COV-2 testing. They are:

- <https://www.pathology.health.nsw.gov.au/covid-19-info/covid-19-testing-information>
- <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/communities-of-practice/Pages/clinical-guidance-and-resources.aspx>

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact the Ministry's GIPA office via email to MOH-GIPA@health.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Makira". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sonia Makira
GIPA Specialist, Corporate Governance & Risk Management

Date: 25 May 2021